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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/038,994	12/31/2001	Yung-Chiang Chung	64.600-093	9619

7590 12/06/2004

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EXAMINER

DRODGE, JOSEPH W

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1723

DATE MAILED: 12/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/038,994

Applicant(s)

CHUNG ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph W. Drodge

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 November 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-6,8,19 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-6,8,19 AND 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

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The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1,2,4,5,6,8,19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morikawa patent 5,887,977 in view of Vanden Bussche et al (hereafter Vanden Bussche) patent 6,655,829 (both of record).

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Morikawa discloses a "microfluidic" mixer (see column 1, lines 19-20 "microflow HPLC systems", column 1, line 60 "photo-chemical processing", column 1, lines 27-28 and 54-56 "extremely small" and "extremely thin", etc.), a substrate (disc 11) having a mixing aperture (11d) at which a plurality of symmetrically spaced and arranged groove channels (3 are shown in channels 11a, 11b and 11c) that terminate only obliquely or tangentially (figures 3 and 4 and column 2, lines 36-38 and column 3, lines 8-10). Resulting swirling type mixing is indicated at column 2, lines 40-41 and other points in the text "rotational angular velocity"). Also shown is an outlet port/outlet at column 2, lines 57-59 [as in claims 19 and 20].

The claims differ in requiring the channels to be parallel to one another at least in the vicinity of the aperture. Vanden Bussche teaches another microfluidic mixer having a larger number of channels that terminate obliquely at the aperture and having plural pairs of the channels which are parallel to one another (figure 1, column 1, lines 30-38, column 4, lines 41-48 and/or column 6, lines 55-62). These channels are also symmetrically spaced (column 5, lines 56-60).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the field of designing equipment for use in analytical laboratories, to have modified the Morikawa apparatus by providing for a larger, even, number of symmetrically spaced channels, pairs or plural pairs of such channels being necessarily parallel near their terminus at the aperture, as taught by Vanden Bussche, to allow more complex, multi-phase and phase-transfer reactions to occur in analytical fluid testing. It is noted that Morikawa is not only directed to HPLC chromatography, but also to any "analytical, reaction testing or other systems" (column 1, line 40).

Regarding claims 4 and 8, figures 3 and 4 of Morikawa show an approximately circular-shaped aperture.

Regarding claims 2 and 6, see Morikawa "cover plate" or "disc 12" and centered outlet port (12a) or (13d).

Regarding claim 5, Morikawa also disclose introduction of at least two reagents (see column 1, lines 39-41 "fluids...analytical, reaction, testing...").

Applicant's arguments filed on November 4, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. It is argued that the channels of Morikawa cannot be parallel to each other since they are arcuate. It is submitted that Vanden Bussche teaches pairs of arcuate channels that are parallel (figure 1, etc.).

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph Drodge at telephone number 571-272-1140. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda Walker, can be reached at 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the examining group where this application is assigned is 703-872-9306.


Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information

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for published applications may be obtained from either private PAIR or Public PAIR, and through Private PAIR only for unpublished applications. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have any questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JWD

December 3, 2004


JOSEPH DRODGE
PRIMARY EXAMINER